

COMMISSION CONFERENCE**DECEMBER 11, 2001**

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Present: Mayor Naugle
Commissioners Hutchinson, Katz, Moore and Smith

Also Present: City Manager, Assistant City Attorney, City Clerk and Police Sergeant

III-B – Advisory Board Vacancies

1. Budget Advisory Board

Action: Deferred.

2. Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

For the DDA, Commissioner Smith wanted to interview Charlie Ladd. Commissioner Hutchinson wished to interview Alan Hooper. Commissioner Katz requested an interview with Richard Zipes, and Commissioner Moore requested Fred Fazio.

Action: Interviews to be scheduled for December 18, 2001.

3. Citizens Review Board

Commissioner Hutchinson wished to reappoint Dean Trantalis to the Citizens Review Board. Commissioner Smith wanted to reappoint Patricia Mayers, and Mayor Naugle reappointed Fenel Antoine.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

4. Community Appearance Board

Commissioner Katz wanted to appoint Dr. Sohyun Park Lee to the Community Appearance Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

5. Community Services Board

Action: Deferred.

6. Education Advisory Board

Commissioner Smith wished to appoint JoAnne Boggus to the Education Advisory Board.

Action: Formal action to be taken at Regular Meeting.

7. Unsafe Structures & Housing Appeals Board

Action: Deferred.

I-A – Annexation

A discussion was scheduled on the City Commission's tour of proposed annexation areas. Mayor Naugle explained that the Commission had been late in starting this meeting because of the tour they had taken. He felt the exhibit should have mentioned that annexation would be subject to the action being revenue-neutral because he did not want the Legislative Delegation to think the City had agreed to annex the areas no matter the revenue impact. Mayor Naugle asked that the memorandum be reissued accordingly for the record.

The City Manager said he would ensure the record was clear as mentioned by Mayor Naugle. However, there was a need for further direction from the Commission. He thanked the Commission for taking the time to tour the subject areas, and he advised that there were 2 currently proposed bills affecting Fort Lauderdale involving Broadview Park and Rock Island. The City Manager thought staff should go forward with all of the information and demographics normally provided to the Commission, but they needed to know if the Commission had any general direction in terms of other areas in which there might be interest. He wanted to know if the Commission wanted to invest the necessary time and resources in researching additional areas for future consideration.

The City Manager reminded everyone that there were certain things that had not yet been resolved in terms of the annexation question. He was concerned about whether or not there was a level playing field on the part of the County such that a certain amount of infrastructure improvements, Community Development Block Grant dollars, parks and other facilities, and subsidies for ongoing operating expenses would be granted. He explained that these discussions were ongoing, but such questions would have to be answered before definitely determining a direction.

Mayor Naugle thought the policy had served well in the past. Although there had been discussion about the area to 31st Avenue at the last meeting, he had no objection to extending the boundary all the way to State Road 7 if the annexations would be revenue-neutral. He said that some of the areas observed today appeared to need significant Code enforcement, and he hoped the listed expenses reflected the necessary level of attention. Mayor Naugle wanted some demonstration that the level of service that would be provided was not just a generic level based on averages throughout the City since there were special needs in some areas.

Commissioner Smith thought the neighborhoods west of 31st Avenue appeared to be more stable than those contiguous to Fort Lauderdale. Mayor Naugle agreed it would make sense to consider areas west to State Road 7 so taxes would not have to be raised to subsidize annexed areas or service levels diminished in some areas to address new areas. He stated that the previous recommendation had been to include opt-out language in the bill in case either of the areas turned out to be revenue-negative. Commissioner Smith understood there were some new strategies to make areas revenue-neutral through negotiations with the County.

The City Manager agreed both of these areas were still being discussed, and opt-out language was included as to both. He explained that if the Commission decided that the City did not want to be part of the election scheduled for November, 2002, that could be so stated. He believed there had been some talk of removing the opt-out language. Mr. Chris Wren, Planning & Zoning, had heard that, and staff would be approaching the Legislative Delegation tomorrow night in order to express the Commission's desire to retain that language. The City Manager felt the City should have the same ability to opt out as other communities had in the interests of fairness. Mayor Naugle agreed, particularly since Fort Lauderdale had demonstrated its good faith in terms of other areas.

Mayor Naugle noted that Rock Island did not have a communications problem, so that would not be a hurdle, but Broadview had a weak signal for emergency personnel that had to be included as an expense. Commissioner Smith wondered how much it might cost to address those needs. The City Manager understood it could cost \$5 million to \$6.3 million depending on the solution. Captain Mike Gregory, Police Department, agreed it might require a new communications tower or sharing systems with the County.

Commissioner Katz was also concerned about ambulance and fire services. Commissioner Smith thought the County could donate the ambulances and fire trucks it currently had to service the subject area. The City Manager felt that was among the strategies worthy of exploration. He was hopeful the County would indicate what it would be willing to do in order to ensure the continuation of services. In fact, the subject had been discussed by the League of Cities.

Commissioner Moore felt the tour had been very helpful, particularly since conditions on the major corridors were not the same as those within the community. He noted that much of the area toured contained single-family homes, and it was necessary to determine how many were Homesteaded to obtain a true evaluation. Mayor Naugle noted that information about senior exemptions was also necessary.

Commissioner Moore inquired about the description and definition of the term "revenue-neutral." He felt the Commission should come to some consensus as to what that meant before making presentations to the different communities. He did not want anyone to think the City was changing the rules and understood what the City meant by revenue-neutral. Commissioner Moore hoped some method of working with the County would be considered because there were certain departments within the County structure from which the City could "wing" it. For example, certain parks were operated by the County, but they were not regional parks. Therefore, if they were annexed, there could be ways to reduce County staff, but perhaps they could continue to operate as County parks for a number of years to avoid hurting current City taxpayers.

Commissioner Katz understood Commissioner Moore's idea, but she believed the City would eventually "get hit" in those areas. Commissioner Moore agreed that was true, but he was hopeful property values would grow and, with it, the tax base. In the meantime, perhaps the costs could be minimized in the first years. This was the reason he wanted to discuss the definition of revenue-neutral, and he noted that it might involved not only money, but "person power" in terms of services offered by the County.

Commissioner Katz believed the County had been discussing the possibility of the City taking over some of their employees in certain areas, so there would be an added expense to the City. Commissioner Moore agreed several things were being discussed, although nothing had yet been settled. His proposal was to talk about the County continuing to employ staff to maintain annexed parks, for example, so the City would not take a big "hit" in the early years. Commissioner Smith thought it could be handled so that the County could take back a park, using the same example, in the future.

Mayor Naugle asked if the City would have to hire the County employees. He believed there had been a problem in the Fire Department recently because a County employee was hired without a background check. Commissioner Moore said that the Broward League of Cities had provided some recommendations that cities do something to absorb County employees when areas were annexed. He advised that the League's Annexation Committee had also taken that position. Commissioner Moore recalled that concerns about employment had come up when the Sheriff's Office had taken over responsibilities from municipalities in certain areas, so that issue had been addressed by the Annexation Committee. He agreed with Commissioner Katz that there would be an impact, but when that impact would take place remained in question.

Commissioner Moore explained that an annexation might take place, for instance, in September, 2002, but the employee transfers could take place at a later date when it would be revenue-neutral. He noted that the County had done an exceptional job in improving infrastructure and parks, and there were issues about capital outlay for ambulances or fire stations, for example. Commissioner Moore thought those things could be put on the table, but he was really concerned with how quickly the County would transfer federal block grant dollars obtained on the basis of the annexed areas. He was also concerned about when the City would take control of such entitlement boundaries.

Mr. Pete Witschen, Assistant City Manager, stated that during discussions about the Interlocal Agreement, he had learned that some federal entitlements would revert to the City upon annexation. However, HUD dollars might take some time to transfer. Mayor Naugle noted that federal allocations were granted by Congress. Therefore, he thought that when an area was annexed, it would be calculated accordingly.

Commissioner Moore did not feel what it would cost should be the only measure of whether or not an annexation would be revenue-neutral. He thought any annexed area should receive the same level of service as did existing residents. Commissioner Moore said this was his greatest concern with respect to Broadview. He was not sure the City would be able to provide the same level of emergency communications and services that were provided to current residents. Commissioner Moore wanted the Commission to place an emphasis on performance.

The City Manager understood Commissioner Moore's point, and it had been suggested that the revenue neutrality of an area be considered over a 5-year time period. He explained that the same level of service could be delivered within a certain time period, and he wanted everyone to understand there would have to be a phasing in of services to be fair to all parties. The City Manager believed the data requested was absolutely germane in order to make some realistic determinations, and he would ensure that annexed areas would receive the same level of commitment as the rest of the community.

At 4:22 P.M., Commissioner Moore left the meeting. He returned at 4:25 P.M.

Mayor Naugle stated that some areas of the City rarely saw police because there was a concentration of police in other neighborhoods. He felt such variations should be taken into consideration when estimating the cost of providing police, fire, Code enforcement services, etc. The City Manager believed that had been taken into consideration, as needs differed in different areas and even from season to season. He believed the projections were realistic.

Mayor Naugle stated that some maps had been developed to show Code enforcement efforts by neighborhood. He wondered if similar maps could be developed as unincorporated areas came forward for consideration of annexation. Commissioner Hutchinson desired such maps as they related to all City services. The City Manager agreed to provide that information.

Commissioner Katz understood that if the City annexed a needy area, another area would also be taken that was not as needy in order to make the action revenue-neutral rather than looking at each area individually. Mayor Naugle thought it could be done in that way with the opt-out language. He felt all the cities should take the same position so the people could decide what municipality they wanted to join. Mayor Naugle believed the County should cover any deficits with the collective efforts of the 1.6 million people paying County taxes and let the people decide.

Commissioner Smith thought cities should have core geographical boundaries. He felt that going out to Broadview was “jumping over” what was historically thought of as Fort Lauderdale. Commissioner Smith felt that made things a little more difficult. Mayor Naugle understood his point, but the Police Department was so much closer to that western area than it was to eastern areas within the City’s boundaries, for example. Commissioner Smith agreed that was true, but he did not know if communities felt they were part of an integral community when they were out at the fringes.

Commissioner Moore did not think police services would provide the greatest difficult because police cars roamed, but emergency services were dispatched from fixed station locations. He was happy to hear the Commission was willing to expand its thought process to State Road 7. Commissioner Moore felt that was a natural line when it came to the City limits. However, if that was going to be the case, he thought there should be some way to also annex some commercial property from other communities that did not annex the “bedroom communities.” Mayor Naugle did not want to open up that idea because it would work both ways. Commissioner Moore was willing to open that “can of worms” if it allowed annexation to be revenue-neutral and appropriate provision of services. Mayor Naugle thought that if the property owners that held the commercial property wanted to switch cities, he would be supportive. He did not, however, want to be an aggressor.

Commissioner Smith asked if there was certainty about the City’s ability to opt out of Broadview Park if it did not make financial sense or if the City could be forced to annex the area. Ms. Sharon Miller, Assistant City Attorney, thought the Legislature could adopt whatever it chose. Mayor Naugle agreed it could go both ways. The Legislature could allow the City to opt out or not. Commissioner Smith asked if there was current law in this regard, and Ms. Miller replied there was not. Mr. Wren added that the currently drafted bills contained the opt-out language, but they could be altered tomorrow night. He stated that staff would represent this policy strongly, and if changes were proposed, staff would voice strong objection. Mayor Naugle believed the other cities would also take that position, so he thought a bill that forced annexation could be defeated.

Mr. Jack Washburn, President of the Broadview Park Civic Association, said he had moved to Broadview Park in 1955, and they had lived comfortably without sewers, streetlights, sidewalks, etc. ever since. It was a nice community where people could walk down the streets at night without fear. Mr. Washburn did not think the residents would be demanding increased service levels if the area were annexed into Fort Lauderdale. Mayor Naugle understood that, but the City had certain policies relating to providing the same standard of service in all its neighborhoods. He explained that streetlights and sidewalks might be optional, but the City was working toward sewerage all of its neighborhoods by 2010. Commissioner Moore pointed out that future residents of Broadview Park might not share the same standards as existing residents either. Therefore, it would be best to attempt to negotiate infrastructure needs with the County up front.

Ms. Jan Washburn, Secretary/Treasurer of the Broadview Park Civic Association, believed the State had signed an agreement with Broward County to install sewers in Broadview Park because of soil conditions and population. Therefore, she believed the County was legally committed to do so, and a streetlight project was almost complete.

Mayor Naugle noted that Broadview Park would have to be sewerage under the City's policy because it was located on the Wellfield. Commissioner Smith wondered if area residents identified themselves as Fort Lauderdale residents. Mr. Washburn believed so. Ms. Washburn said it was her feeling that Plantation tended to neglect the areas east of the Turnpike. Although she tended toward Fort Lauderdale, there was division in the community in this regard.

Mayor Naugle summarized that it was the Commission's policy that if annexing an area made financial sense, the people living there should make the decision about which community to join.

Ms. Leola McCoy agreed there was a natural boundary at State Road 7 dating back to 1944. She was also concerned about the "suppressed appraisals" performed by the County Property Appraiser in black communities. For example, she had done a considerable amount of work to her home of 2,800 square feet, but it was apparently only worth \$50,000. Further, there was a lot of industrial pollution to consider. Ms. McCoy felt the County should provide a list of all the polluting properties in the unincorporated areas so the cost of bringing them up to current standards could be considered. She thought the City should consider reducing costs for annexation by contracting with the Broward Sheriff's Office to provide police services in some areas as well.

Action: As discussed.

I-B – Employment Issues

A discussion was scheduled on the City Manager's recommendations resulting from Judge Henry Latimer's report regarding his investigation of complaints on employment practices in the City, which was presented at the November 6, 2001 Conference meeting. The City Manager stated that he had issued his response to this Commission relating to the recommendations made by Judge Latimer yesterday.

The City Manager summarized his recommendations, including the establishment of a Department of Professional Standards to examine the operations, policies, procedures and practices of the EEO and to offer recommendations for improvement. He stated that he was not recommending any organizational changes at this time, although changes could be addressed during the budgeting process, but additional and new training opportunities would be provided to employees, supervisors and managers. He pointed out that ongoing reviews were underway by the Attorney General's Office as well as by outside counsel. In fact, during the course of Judge Latimer's investigation, the Commission had authorized Commissioner Moore to convene some representatives from the community to provide some recommendations as to employment practices and procedures.

The City Manager noted that he had provided some specific recommendations to the Commission, several of which could be implemented immediately. Others could be substantially complete by the end of the fiscal year. He wanted to rename the entity that handled EEO and any other employee complaints related to the violation of any of the City's professional standards to the Department of Professional Standards, with an initial staff of four, including a legal component. The City Manager described the four positions proposed and the qualifications and responsibilities of each. He stated that with the Commission's approval, those things could be put in place almost immediately.

The City Manager said that the level of training provided to employees could also be enhanced immediately. In addition, currently optional training could be made mandatory immediately for supervisory personnel. He added that making such training available on a computerized basis could also be accomplished by the end of the fiscal year.

The City Manager stated that Judge Latimer had also recommended the restructuring of top management, particularly in his office. Judge Latimer felt greater sensitivity and attention to these kinds of concerns could be achieved if the Assistant City Managers were able to get "closer to the troops." The City Manager said he would take this recommendation under advisement. Although he agreed it would be helpful to have top managers in greater touch with the "pulse of the employees," he did not know that it should involve the Assistant City Managers or the Department Heads, or even the lower in management ranks. He felt that remained to be seen. Further, when one examined how complex these positions had become over the past several years, reducing the number of managers might not be the best tact to take.

The City Manager felt some succession planning would be a more responsible approach in order to preserve the knowledge and experience of current managers and maintain the integrity of the existing organization. He believed it would be necessary to examine these issues in the context of the long term so whatever organizational changes were made would be sustainable. The City Manager said that any such changes would be included in next year's budget, and he felt the City should avail itself of every possible option, including merging jobs and responsibilities, retirements, continuous assessment of conditions, etc. He felt continuous assessment was a very important need, but only 88 individuals had been interviewed during Judge Latimer's examination. He preferred something a little more broad-based that involved the entire workforce in order to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses with greater accuracy. The City Manager also wished to approach this issue with some degree of regularity rather than approaching it only when there was some sort of crisis.

The City Manager said that this issue would continue to remain a high priority, but he hoped it would not continue to be the single issue that took necessary attention away from all the other legitimate business of the City. Although it was as important as other things, it was not the only matter that required attention and priority. He wanted to ensure that all the City's employees and residents occupied a place of importance as far as his administration and this governing body were concerned.

Ms. Leola McCoy said she had read the report and felt it just called for another layer of bureaucracy that would not address the deficiencies. She thought it was time to stop blaming the messenger. *Ms. McCoy* stated that *Elgin Jones* had been mistreated and intimidated, and there had been an ongoing campaign to discredit him. She did not feel this report would resolve anything, and she felt it was completely unacceptable.

Commissioner Smith requested more information about the nature of the new training for frontline supervisors. He believed Judge Latimer had found the greatest number of problems within those ranks. The City Manager advised there had not been a "blanket indictment" of every frontline supervisor, but there were various supervisory courses that were voluntary. He felt that was a flaw because they were not required. He proposed to make such training mandatory within a certain period of time after hiring or promotion. Commissioner Smith asked the City Manager to provide the Commission with the details of the specific curriculum proposed that could be shared with the community. The City Manager agreed to do so.

Commissioner Katz thought last-line managers were a concern as well to ensure that the training went all the way up to the top, including the City Commission. She felt the recommendations provided a first step and a beginning, and she agreed that restructuring the EEO office was a good start. Commissioner Katz wanted to wait for the Attorney General's report and put it together with the information gathered by both Judge Latimer's group and Mr. McCormick's group. Once all the information had been pooled, she thought it would be easier to determine the appropriate next steps.

The City Manager agreed this had to be an ongoing process. In fact, the idea of training the work force had been initiated during his first year as the City Manager. He viewed this as a continuing process as additional information was gathered, and he wanted to be able to demonstrate to the Commission that these efforts had made a difference with empirical data. Although the City Manager did not want to start down a "slippery slope" by discussing the number of complaints or cases as the only measure of performance. In fact, he expected there would be "spikes" in such data as more information was made available and more inquiries were made.

Commissioner Moore recalled and Judge Latimer had found that minority and non-minority employees felt the most egregious employment practices in the City were those that allowed supervisors to engage in behavior that was unfair and unprofessional. He did not believe his report had been about discrimination, per se, but unfair employment practices by supervisors and mid-level managers. Another issue was that employees did not feel they had anywhere to go to seek recourse. In fact, minority and non-minority employees felt they placed their careers at risk by questioning unprofessional or unfair behavior on the part of supervisors. Commissioner Moore understood all the employees interviewed had concurred that there had been unfair treatment and unprofessional conduct in terms of promotions, transfers, job assignments, work site locations, counseling and suspensions. They had also concurred that supervisors operated their units as if they were totally independent of the overall organization. Commissioner Moore concluded that there were accountability issues that had to be addressed.

Commissioner Moore noted that employees had indicated they felt it was unfair that the City provided a place for minority and female employees to seek recourse in the event of poor treatment on the basis of race and gender, but not for all employees. Further, employees felt that some supervisors were not disciplined for infractions less egregious than offenses for which they had been punished.

Commissioner Moore said the emphasis he had seen in this report had been that the City had not addressed a method for supervisors and managers to be responsible. He thought the reason there had been a number of discrimination complaints was because there was an Attorney prepared to address racial issues and represent individuals. Based on this report, Commissioner Moore was concerned about other issues across-the-Board in terms what management was or was not doing with respect to fairness.

Commissioner Moore noted that minority purchasing matters would be handled by the Purchasing Division as recommended by the City Manager, but the City had no set-aside or even a goal as to procurement in terms of minority, small, women-owned, and disadvantaged businesses. He felt something had to be done about that because it was part of the equation. Commissioner Moore suggested some type of disparity study to allow individuals to do business with the City.

Commissioner Moore recalled a Fair Share agreement with the NAACP a few years ago with respect to economic development. He felt that should be addressed during discussions about MBE/WBE/DBE businesses and that the local branch of the NAACP be invited to review the Fair Share agreement to see how well goals were being met. Commissioner Moore agreed this function should be handled by the Purchasing Division, as opposed to the EEO office, but it would do little good without a disparity study and some goals.

Commissioner Moore understood there was a problem with how employees were treated when they had a complaint. He supported the idea of a Department of Professional Standards, and he had no objection to the staffing proposed. Commissioner Moore was more concerned about resolving complaints more quickly. He felt complaints should be handled within a specified timeframe so there would be some closure. Mayor Naugle felt that should apply to residents or customers as well as to employees. Commissioner Moore concurred, although he felt that was another subject.

Commissioner Katz thought the new Director of the Department of Professional Standards would have the responsibility of closing complaints within a set time period. Commissioner Moore agreed, but he felt the City Manager should set that timetable. He also felt the training of supervisors, particularly those promoted into a supervisory role, should take place within an established timeframe. Commissioner Smith believed the City Manager had indicated this could be accomplished within this fiscal year. Mayor Naugle thought those who were promoted into "acting" supervisory positions should receive that training as well, particularly when they served in those roles for 6 months. Commissioner Smith felt it should be immediate.

The City Manager agreed with the points raised, but there were details to be worked out. He explained that a union employee might be promoted into a first-line supervisory position, but he understood the Commission wanted the training to be completely successfully within a time certain.

Commissioner Moore thought it was important that there be an assessment of the hiring and promotional boards. He was interested in who was evaluating that process, and he felt someone from the new Department of Professional Standards should participate in the assessment centers to ensure an appropriate process. Commissioner Smith agreed.

Commissioner Moore pointed out that the City Commission hired and fired just three people, and he suggested that the City Manager establish an open door policy to entities, organizations, and employees. He felt the City Manager already had such a policy, but there were others who did not share that feeling.

The City Manager was concerned that an open-door policy could be abused. However, he felt he had been open and accessible within the bounds of his responsibilities. He had reaffirmed such a policy with the NAACP and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and he'd had opportunities to extend that accessibility to the Urban League. The City Manager wanted to be open and accessible, personally and through his Assistants, to anyone who wished to discuss these types of matters.

Commissioner Hutchinson said she had not been overly thrilled with this report. She was glad the EEO office would be restructured, and she supported the idea of additional training. However, she would have hoped such training would have been ongoing year by year and was not something new. She felt training was wonderful, but only if it was put to use in the field. Otherwise, it was a waste of time. Commissioner Hutchinson was glad that problems were being acknowledged, but she thought some of the problems came from upper level management. She also did not think Assistant City Managers should be department heads, and she hoped all these things leveled off before evaluation time next year.

Mayor Naugle had feelings similar to Commissioner Hutchinson's. He viewed this as a first, "baby" step, and there was a great deal more work to do. Mayor Naugle understood a Department of Professional Standards would be established, but the City did not even have standards in place that could be enforced. He stated that there were still managers bringing employees home to do personal work, and there had been situations in which lower level supervisors were fired for talking about things that upper level supervisors were actually doing. Mayor Naugle felt Judge Latimer's report had been extremely helpful, and he hoped the City Manager would bring forth additional recommendations to address the problems identified in the report.

At 5:28 P.M., Commissioner Moore left the meeting. He returned at 5:30 P.M.

Mayor Naugle recalled that an ad hoc committee had been formed when the City had changed its technological environment, and he wondered if a similar committee could be formed to address employment practices. He pointed out that there were a lot of companies and institutions in Fort Lauderdale that could provide some expertise in this regard.

Commissioner Moore said that he did not view these recommendations as a first step. He stated that a number of steps had been taken over the past few years, and he did not understand why people kept saying that nothing was being done. In fact, a lot had been done, although everyone might not be satisfied with the results of those actions. He said that he did not see the same diversity in other communities as there was in Fort Lauderdale, and he felt there should be some balance. Commissioner Moore did not want anyone to think that the City had deplorable working conditions when the situation here was better than in other communities.

Commissioner Smith was glad that the City Manager had acknowledged a problem, although he seemed to be relying heavily on restructuring the EEO office and providing training. He wanted to see the details of the training programs and the plan that would accomplish the goals, but he was willing to give the City Manager some time to provide that information. The City Manager advised that he had been working on these things all along, and everyone with more than two employees on any given day had difficulties with interpersonal relationships, management, etc. He agreed with Commissioner Moore that the City was not "the worst of the worst," but there was still a long way to go. The City Manager was committed to addressing the situation properly.

Commissioner Katz believed there had been organizations that had offered help in this regard.

Action: As discussed.

Mayor Naugle announced that the City Commission would meet privately regarding litigation strategy in connection with Katrenia McCutcheon v City of Fort Lauderdale (Case No. 99-6845-CIV-FERGUSON), and A&N Properties (United States Concrete Pipe Company) v City of Fort Lauderdale (Case Nos. 98-009806[09] and 97-011097[13]).

At 5:35 P.M., the meeting was recessed. It was reconvened at 7:00 P.M. in the City Commission Meeting Room.

**I-C – Ad Hoc Committee on Public Transportation –
Regional Activity Center (RAC) Sub-Area Mobility Study**

A discussion was scheduled on a recommendation by the Ad Hoc Committee on Public Transportation for an RAC Sub-Area Mobility Study. Mr. Peter Partington, Public Services Department, explained that an ad hoc committee had been appointed by the City Commission a few months ago to advise on public transportation issues. He stated that three meetings of the committee had been held, and it had been primarily concentrating on the scope of work prepared under a contract with the Downtown Development Authority (DDA). Mr. Partington said the estimated value of that scope of work was \$400,000.

Mr. Partington reported that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) was prepared to fund about half of the cost of the work through a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA), so an additional \$200,000 would be needed. He advised that the DDA had agreed to provide \$50,000, and requests had been submitted to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and the County for funding. Mr. Partington stated that the MPO would consider a request for \$50,000 at its December 13, 2001 meeting.

Mr. Partington advised that the ad hoc committee was recommending that the City contribute at least \$50,000 toward the cost of this study, and details on the scope of the work had been distributed to the Commission. He stated that the DDA could collect the funds from the different agencies through JPAs and administer the study. Mr. Partington noted that a 14-member study advisory committee was suggested to oversee the study during the process.

Mr. Partington said that another issue had been raised in terms of coordinating with the City's Master Plan. It was suggested that the scope of the studies include a requirement that the consultants coordinate with one another to minimize overlap. He advised that it was also recommended that two members of the advisory committee serve on a technical advisory committee to ensure coordination. He added that the modeling work associated with the transportation element of the City's Master Plan be reduced to avoid duplication of work proposed within the scope of this study.

Mr. Partington noted that the City had some public transportation proposals of its own, including ideas for the beach, and staff recommended that the City continue to pursue funding for the transit proposals already existing, specifically in the beach area. He summarized that staff recommended the City Commission authorize the expenditure of \$50,000 for this study; that both studies be coordinated; and, to have the ad hoc committee consider some other short-term transit improvements.

Commissioner Smith supported this expenditure, but he had some concerns. He noted that Atlanta had its MARTA system that was operated on a rail line. Commissioner Smith hoped something could be worked out in terms of the rail line that ran through Fort Lauderdale. He also felt there should be a link between the beach trolley system and the T-Max system. Commissioner Smith wished to specifically add that to the scope of services. It was agreed.

Commissioner Moore wondered why the DDA had been selected to serve as the lead agency. Mr. Partington thought it was because the DDA had originally commissioned the development of this scope of work. Commissioner Moore was concerned because the City was being asked to contribute the same amount of money as the DDA, and he preferred the City retain some control. The fact that the scope included no link between this and the beach was a cause for concern, particularly since there was not much City participation on the suggested technical committee.

Commissioner Moore referred to item 3 on the last page of the back-up memorandum. He understood the desire to address mass transit on the beach and downtown, but that recommendation only mentioned the beach transportation system. He felt there was a need for some other links to mass transit. Although Lauderdale Manors had been mentioned as a prototype neighborhood, he wanted to see that extended to a number of other neighborhoods throughout the City, and that did not appear to be on the table either.

Commissioner Moore noted that the map identified as Exhibit A provided highlights of the mass transit greenway connection, but significant places had been excluded, such as the African American Research Library, the Mizell Library, the Dillard Museum, and other significant properties on the corridor. He pointed out that the map showed no connection at 7th Avenue and Sistrunk Boulevard either, and neither the Urgent Care Facility nor the Post Office were connected on the map. In fact, schools and parks were not connected either. Commissioner Moore felt this whole thing was flawed and missed the target, and he was particularly concerned that the City's participation would be so narrow.

Mr. Tom Gustafson, Ad Hoc Committee member, had drafted the scope of the work at the request of the DDA that would be fundable by the FDOT. He stated that a local circulator downtown had been requested, and the CRA had made a similar request with respect to Sistrunk Boulevard. That had not yet “matured,” but the same kind of analysis was pending for Sistrunk corridor. He explained that the DDA had been primarily examining the area of the RAC as a first focus. Mr. Gustafson stated that linkages to the beach had been generally verbalized in the scope of the work, but he thought making it more specific was a good idea and could be accommodated in this language.

Mr. Gustafson explained that this had to be big enough to get the FDOT’s interest, but not so large that nothing could be accomplished. He stated that if something could be started in one area where success seemed likely, things could be added over time. However, if the effort was started “galactically” from the beginning, he feared Fort Lauderdale would be waiting for funding for 30 years.

Mr. Gustafson acknowledged that this scope was not perfect, and it was open to change. However, many changes had already been made. Nevertheless, the intent was that this link to a similar system on the Sistrunk corridor to the TriRail and back again on Broward Boulevard. However, that section was thought to be part of the CRA initiative and subject to CRA approval. As to the DDA serving as the lead agency, Mr. Gustafson said the subject had been raised on several occasions. He pointed out that money was coming from various services, and the DDA did not propose to control the study but to create an advisory committee for the purpose. Mr. Gustafson stated that each participating agency would provide three members to the advisory committee, so all the parties would have an equal share. He viewed the DDA’s role as one of managing the bank account so pay for the work to be done under the direction of the advisory committee. Further, each agency would have veto power if two of their three appointees did not agree on something.

Commissioner Moore was even more concerned. His reading of the document did not reveal a linkage in terms of Broward Boulevard, I-95 and the TriRail. He felt if the idea was to reduce traffic into the downtown area, there had to be a mass transit component that was on time, clean, efficient, and convenient. He was concerned that this scope did not include that as it was focused on the downtown RAC and would be guided by the DDA. Commissioner Moore supported the idea of bringing all the players to the table, but he wanted it done correctly. He said he would like an opportunity to raise his concerns with the advisory committee.

Mayor Naugle was concerned because the ad hoc committee had met three times, but he had not received any of the meeting minutes.

Commissioner Hutchinson noted that the map showed a link to the TriRail. Mr. Gustafson agreed that was correct and added that the text also made such a reference. He explained that in order to obtain funding, there had to be transit links, and this would link to the TriRail and the downtown bus terminal. Further, the text also indicated that community links within and outside the study area would also be examined, particularly as to transit, TriRail, Airport, Port and beach linkages. Mr. Gustafson acknowledged that was more of a general statement than a specific statement, but it had also been assumed that there would be a Sistrunk corridor initiative coming from the CRA.

Commissioner Smith thought it appeared there was a linkage to Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Gustafson thought he was looking at an older map, but the Sistrunk corridor could be added to the study unless the Commission wanted the CRA to handle that aspect. Commissioner Smith felt this study should link to Sistrunk Boulevard. In the future, he desired links to State Road 84, the Galt Ocean Mile, etc. Mr. Gustafson felt the best linkage would be to Sistrunk Boulevard, through Delevoe Park, to the Konover property, to the TriRail and back again on Broward Boulevard. He thought the issue was whether that should be included in this study or addressed by the CRA.

Commissioner Smith wondered what was wrong with a linkage on Northwest 7th Avenue to Sistrunk Boulevard. Mr. Gustafson said that had been included on the original map, but the feeling had been that should be addressed in the CRA initiative. Commissioner Moore said he would be much more comfortable if this was tabled for the time being so he could have some dialogue with the committee and review the meeting minutes. He understood the need for a phased approach, but he was concerned about the lack of significant mass transit linkages in this study.

Mr. Gustafson noted that when the MPO met on Thursday, it would want to know whether or not the City wanted the \$50,000 on their consent agenda. Commissioner Smith felt this meant that MPO staff had finally reached this point, and he and Commissioner Katz would have to convince 13 of their colleagues from all over the County to contribute \$50,000 to spend in Fort Lauderdale. Commissioner Moore said he would have to be convinced to support the expenditure of \$50,000. Commissioner Smith felt links to the African American Library, for example, were inappropriate for this study because that was too far from the core. He thought a mass transit effort had to be started in the core of the City with links added over time. Commissioner Smith feared that everyone would want to extend links to the furthest reaches of the City, and this whole thing would fall apart.

Mayor Naugle suggested that the Commission conceptually approve the \$50,000 contribution pending additional discussion on January 8, 2002. Commissioner Katz had a few concerns and, at some point, she wished to go over this piece by piece. She was concerned, for example, that some of the points in this study would reproduce efforts associated with the comprehensive plan. Commissioner Katz did not want to pay twice for the same study, and she felt the Commission should go through it point by point to determine what questions would be addressed in which study.

Mr. Gustafson advised that the study provided for a review by the City as the data was being collected. He reiterated that if two of the City's three appointees to the committee disagreed, a different direction could be taken. He added that he had spoken with the CRA Advisory Board on three occasions to initiate this study and, if the CRA decided to initiate the same kind of study on the Sistrunk Corridor, it could be included in this study as well. Mr. Gustafson said it was a question of whether the Commission preferred CRA jurisdiction or the jurisdiction of this study. He had been told that the preference was for CRA jurisdiction as to the Sistrunk Corridor.

Commissioner Katz supported Mayor Naugle's idea of supporting the \$50,000 contribution in concept with additional discussion on the details later. Mayor Naugle thought the study should include, if not now then in future phases, the links to the other areas as discussed. He was sure the City Manager would bring back something that would take all the points raised this evening into consideration. It was the consensus of the Commission to take this action, although Commissioner Moore did not support the idea. He did not think this would ever be done right if the money was approved today, and he wanted more input. Commissioner Moore believed the mass transit needs on the Sistrunk Corridor were far greater than the needs elsewhere.

It was the consensus of the Commission to conceptually approve the expenditure pending additional discussion later. Mayor Naugle encouraged Commissioners Katz and Smith to do the best they could to convince the MPO to contribute funds. He wanted to speak with the DDA, but he noted that none of the DDA's plans could be inconsistent with City plans as that organization was subservient to the City. Mayor Naugle felt the DDA could probably scrutinize this study better than the City in light of the many things going on now in Fort Lauderdale. Further, there would be a Commissioner on the committee.

Action: Conceptually approved as discussed.

At 7:29 P.M., the meeting was recessed. It was reconvened at 9:12 P.M.

I-E – Urban Design Initiative

The City Commission was scheduled to recommend four pilot projects to be conducted as part of the Urban Design Initiative. Mayor Naugle said he would have preferred a list to the book that had been distributed because he had found it confusing.

Commissioner Katz supported Project #1 – Urban Design Plan. She wondered if the Riverwalk Design Guidelines could be a part of this. Commissioner Hutchinson noted that was already set. Commissioner Moore supported Project #4 – Boulevard Enhancements. Commissioner Hutchinson was not sure it needed to be a part of this, but she supported the Riverwalk Design Guidelines Project. She understood that money had been allocated for the purpose. Commissioner Smith supported Project #9 – Fine Arts Collection, but he selected the Neighborhood Parks Project instead.

Action: As discussed.

II-C – Amendment to Speed Hump Policy – Roads Immediately Adjacent/Bordering Public Parks

Status Report.

Action: Approved.

I-G – Florida League of Cities – Request for Funds in Support of Public Service Announcements for Tourist Destination Cities

A discussion was scheduled on a request received from Florida League of Cities for funds in the amount of \$25,000 for public service announcements for tourist destination cities. Mayor Naugle noted that he had been asked to meet with other Mayors to develop a plan to promote tourism. However, the back-up memorandum did not reflect the proposal put together by the League of Cities. He explained that there was a \$20 million State program to provide 50/50 matches to communities. Therefore, if a collection of four cities put together an advertising campaign to visit one another's cities, the amount would be matched 50% by "Visit Florida." The Mayors had then approached the Florida Broadcast Network, which had agreed to double the time. Therefore, for an investment of \$25,000, the City would receive one quarter of a \$400,000 advertising campaign.

Commissioner Smith wondered if there would be an opportunity to examine the content of the advertising. Mayor Naugle advised that an outline had been provided, and if there were any suggestions, he was sure changes could be incorporated. Commissioner Smith wondered if Disney would produce the spot. Mayor Naugle thought the Mayor of Orlando was probably looking for advertising of the City itself rather than Disney World. Commissioner Smith wondered if the Disney producers would be willing to handle it since it was located in Orlando. Mayor Naugle noted that St. Petersburg and Tampa were also being approached to participate, and everyone might not agree, but he wanted to know if the Commission supported the concept.

Commissioner Katz believed the City had recently contributed \$25,000 for local promotion efforts. Mr. Pete Witschen, Assistant City Manager, stated that a report in that regard would be presented on December 18, 2001, but this would not duplicate those efforts. He explained that the idea was to cross promote the four cities and would not duplicate what had been done locally.

Commissioner Katz thought it seemed as if efforts were already being made. Commissioner Moore hoped the Commission would not allow this opportunity to pass. He felt this would be \$25,000 well spent to capitalize on the driving market. Commissioner Hutchinson was not opposed. Mr. Witschen believed the funds could be provided from General Fund Contingencies.

Action: Approved. Formal action to be taken on December 18, 2001.

I-D – Redistricting Consultant Evaluation Committee

Action: Deferred.

I-F – Social and Cultural Funding and Promotional Funding Goals for Fiscal Year 2002/2003

Action: Deferred.

II-A – State Revolving Fund Loans – Department of Environmental Protection

Action: Deferred.

II-B – Fire-Rescue Administration Building/Fire Station No. 2

Action: Deferred.

IV – City Commission Reports

1. Neighborhood Associations

Commissioner Smith distributed some information about the City of Salem, Oregon, which had an interesting way of dealing with its neighborhood organizations. It had a successful process, and Commissioner Smith asked that the subject be placed on the December 18th agenda. It was the consensus to discuss it at the January 8, 2002 meeting.

Action: Subject to be placed on January 8, 2002 agenda.

2. Las Olas Boulevard Bridge - Decorations

Commissioner Smith wanted to recognize some companies that had pledged monies to decorate the Las Olas Boulevard Bridge for the holidays. He stated that about \$3,000 had been contributed by Shuts & Bowen, EDSA, and Tamara Peacock to make the Bridge festive.

Action: None.

3. Beach Renourishment Conference

Commissioner Smith said there was a Beach Renourishment Conference in Biloxi, Mississippi in January, but he could not attend. He distributed information about the Conference.

Action: None.

4. FPL Substations

Commissioner Hutchinson felt the City should develop some guidelines about the appearance of Florida Power & Light (FPL) Substations. She suggested that a group be formed, including staff and FPL representatives, to come up with some guidelines because more power resources were necessary. However, she did not want to see them built in the future as they had in the past. Mayor Naugle suggested she meet with staff, FPL and representatives from the neighborhood that would be affected in the near future. Commissioner Hutchinson was glad to do so and added that the locations of substations was also a matter of concern.

Commissioner Moore did not feel there should be any discussion with FPL until it had done what had been requested at the Regal Trace development. Commissioner Hutchinson felt that could be the topic of the first meeting. Commissioner Moore did not feel adequate maintenance of facilities was provided by FPL, and no consideration was given to communities. He did not think there should be any discussion about future guidelines until FPL had indicated how it would deal with the existing substations.

Mayor Naugle suggested that staff provide a recommendation about existing sites, and Commissioner Hutchinson's committee could work toward some guidelines. She felt participation from FPL was essential.

Action: As discussed.

5. Sunshine Properties, 637 Southwest 15th Avenue

Commissioner Hutchinson asked that the Sunshine Properties at 637 Southwest 15th Avenue be placed on the December 18, 2001 agenda in order to address concerns from the neighborhood. Mayor Naugle suggested that it be considered at the regular meeting after the public hearings. It was agreed.

Action: Subject to be placed on December 18, 2001 agenda.

6. Shopping Cart Ordinance

Commissioner Hutchinson felt a shopping cart ordinance should be considered. She stated that there were a lot of carts in her neighborhood, and she was tired of seeing Public Services employees collecting them for nothing. Commissioner Hutchinson believed an ordinance had been drafted some time ago, but it had never been adopted. Mayor Naugle suggested that staff schedule an ordinance for first reading and contact the groceries stores in order to get some attention.

Action: As discussed.

7. Beverly Heights

Commissioner Hutchinson reported that workers from the Venezia building were parking in the Beverly Heights neighborhood on a daily basis. They were blocking driveways, and the workers were belligerent as well. She thought the subject of permit parking should be discussed. Mayor Naugle felt the cars should be towed. Ms. Cecelia Hollar, Construction Services, reported that John Smith and Ted DeSmith had spoken with some people at the site, but it appeared there would have to be some more serious discussions, perhaps along with Mr. Kisela. Mayor Naugle thought the easiest way to address the problem would be to tow the cars once. He believed that once someone had to pay \$150 to get their car back, they would not do it again. Mayor Naugle pointed out that the contractor had a responsibility to provide parking for the workers and, if he did not comply, the job itself could be shut down.

Action: As discussed.

8. Conference in Atlanta

Commissioner Katz noted that there had been some very interesting information provided about handling terrorism at the recent conference in Atlanta. In addition, there had been informative presentations about sustainable development and smart growth. There had also been a short private conference with representatives from the National League of Cities, and she had some other information about economic development and zoning she intended to share with the Commission in the near future.

Action: None.

9. Citizens Review Board

Commissioner Katz understood there had been a few members of the Citizens Review Board who did not want to continue to serve because they questioned the Board's effectiveness. Mayor Naugle said he had examined the flow chart prepared in this regard, and he did not think it would be possible due to public records laws. Although he did not think the proposal was legally feasible, he thought the Commission could examine the issues.

Action: As discussed.

10. Economic Development Plan

Commissioner Katz hoped the Commission would be discussing the Economic Development Plan at the December 18, 2001 meeting. Mr. Witschen advised that a discussion was scheduled for December 18, 2001, although the Economic Development Advisory Board had wanted to wait. It was the consensus of the Commission to consider the subject on December 18, 2001.

Action: Subject to be considered on December 18, 2001.

V – City Manager Reports

1. Coastal Cities Coalition

The City Manager reported that the City had been invited to participate in the Coastal Cities Coalition meeting on December 13, 2001 in Hollywood, and Commissioner Smith planned to attend. He had a conflict, so Mr. Witschen would attend in his place.

Action: None.

2. Imaging System – Personnel Department

The City Manager reported that there would be an item on the next agenda to allocate \$575,000 to implement an imaging system in the Personnel Department, which had been under discussion for several years. Due to the amount of the expenditure, the City Manager had planned for a demonstration of the system next week, and the vendor would be available on December 18, 2001.

Action: As discussed.

3. CRA Boundaries

The City Manager reported that there had been some discussions with County staff relating to the CRA boundaries to the north and the Konover site. He advised that a number of conditions had been proposed by the County Administrator. The City Manager said there were still efforts underway to make changes to the Statutes governing CRAs. He reported that the item related to the extension of the boundaries and annexation had been pulled by Commissioner Rodstrom because he had not been ready to support a portion. Further, the County Commission had accepted the County Administrator's request to withdraw his local bill, but the general bill would still go forward.

Action: None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:41 P.M.

NOTE: A MECHANICAL RECORDING HAS BEEN MADE OF THE FOREGOING PROCEEDINGS, OF WHICH THESE MINUTES ARE A PART, AND IS ON FILE IN THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS.